

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05  
SP-02 SS-15 PA-01 IO-13 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 EB-08  
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R 231445Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2301  
INFO USNISSION USNATO 3506

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 1592

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: OVIP, NL  
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER KLAAUW VISIT TO US,  
APRIL 10-11

REF: THE HAGUE 1467

1. SUMMARY: AS THE DATE FOR HIS WASHINGTON CONSULTATIONS  
APPROACHES, THE REPUTATION OF DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER  
KLAAUW CONTINUES TO DECLINE DOMESTICALLY. END SUMMARY

2. IN AN ELECTION SPEECH (PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR  
MARCH 29) FORMER PRIME MINISTER DEN UYL ATTACKED VAN DER  
KLAAUW DIRECTLY, CALLING HIM A BUNGLER AND RHETORICALLY  
ASKING HOW LONG THE NETHERLANDS COULD AFFORD TO BE REPRESENTED  
BY A MAN SO UNSURE OF HIMSELF. OTHER PARLIAMENTARY SOURCES  
HAVE CONFIRMED TO US THAT VAN DER KLAAUW'S REPUTATION IN  
PARLIAMENT IS BAD AND GETTING WORSE. FOR A MINISTER WHOSE  
MAIN WEAKNESS IS THE INABILITY TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HE IS  
ON TOP OF HIS BRIEF, VAN DER KLAAUW SEEMS TO TAKE A CASUAL  
APPROACH. AT A NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION, WHERE HE LINGERED AS IF  
HE HAD NOTHING ELSE TO DO, HE MENTIONED TO THE CHARGE THAT HE  
WOULD BE SPENDING THE EASTER HOLIDAYS IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.  
THIS FEEDS A GROWING IMPRESSION THAT VAN DER KLAAUW'S STYLE AND  
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APPROACH BELONG TO A BYGONE AGE OF GENTLEMANLY DIPLOMACY AND DO  
NOT MEASURE UP TO THE HARD REQUIREMENTS OF TODAY.

3. IN A NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW JUST PUBLISHED IN NATIONAL DAILY  
"VOLKSKRANT," VAN DER KLAAUW ADMITS THAT HE TOOK THE JOB WITHOUT  
REALIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH PARLIAMENT.  
A POLITICAL ADVISER TO HELP HIM IN THE AREA MIGHT BE USEFUL, HE

COMMENTED. HE ALSO MADE SOME WEAK REMARKS ON THE ALMELO ISSUE, ADDING THAT IN WASHINGTON HE INTENDED TO FIND OUT PRECISELY THE PURPOSE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S NUCLEAR POLICY. (WE EXPECT THAT SOCIALIST LEADERS WILL NOT LOSE TIME IN POINTING OUT THAT VAN DER KLAUW SHOULD ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER. THIS EMBASSY HAS BEEN FURNISHING THE MINISTRY ON A RUNNING BASIS WITH BACKGROUND INFORMATION, DRAWING ON EXTENSIVE AND HELPFUL WASHINGTON GUIDANCE.)

4. ON ERW, VAN DER KLAUW TOLD "VOLKSKRANT" HE ANTICIPATED AMERICAN PRESSURE DURING HIS WASHINGTON VISIT BUT BRAVELY STATED THAT HE WOULD TELL SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE AND SECRETARY OF DEFENSE BROWN THAT THE GON COULD NOT COMMIT ITSELF TO STORAGE (SIC) OF THE ERW IF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. "I KNOW THAT THERE WILL BE A STORM FOR THE NETHERLANDS WHEN I GET TO WASHINGTON," OBSERVED THE FOREIGN MINISTER.

5. COMMENT: EVEN THOUGH VAN DER KLAUW HAS NOT BEEN DOING WELL AND STILL HAS A GREAT DEAL TO LEARN ABOUT HANDLING PARLIAMENT AND THE PRESS, WE DO NOT EXPECT THAT HE WILL SOON DISAPPEAR AS DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER, AS DID HIS COLLEAGUE KRUISINGA. KRUISINGA WAS THOROUGHLY DISLIKED AND HAD FEW FRIENDS. VAN DER KLAUW, BY CONTRAST, IS PERSONABLE AND VIEWED WITH COM-PASSION RATHER THAN ANGER. MOREOVER, VAN DER KLAUW DOES NOT SEEM BOTHERED BY QUESTIONS OF CONSCIENCE, AS WAS KRUISINGA. NEVERTHELESS, A WEAK AND DECLINING REPUTATION WILL CAUSE VAN  
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DER KLAUW SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN DEALING WITH INTERNATIONAL ISSUES THAT HAVE DOMESTIC POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**TAGS:** OVIP, NL, US, (VAN DER KLAUW)  
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